

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action dated August 9, 2007, claims 1, 16 and 27 have been amended. Claims 1-2, 4, 7-18, 20 and 23-30 are pending in the application.

In paragraph 2 on page 2 of the Office Action, claims 1, 2, 4, 7-18, 20 and 23-31 were rejected under § 103(b) as being unpatentable over Larson et al. in view of Hackbarth et al. and further in view of Fitser.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection, but in the interest of expediting prosecution have amended independent claims 1, 16 and 27.

As recited in amended independent claims 1, 16 and 27, conference logistics are received from a subscriber initiating a conference. The conference logistics include a participant communication address. Participant profile data is provided by the subscriber, wherein the participant profile data comprises a plurality of participant communication addresses and current participant communication addresses associated with each of the plurality of participant communication addresses. Conference bridge ports are allocated for a number of participants associated with participant communication addresses in the participant profile data for the conference in accordance with the conference logistics. After allocating the conference bridge ports to set up the conference, a current participant communication address is extracted from the conference logistics provided by the subscriber.

A determination is made whether the participant profile data includes a current participant communication address matching the current participant communication address extracted from the conference logistics. If the participant profile data does not include a current participant communication address matching the current participant communication address extracted from the conference logistics, then the extracted participant communication

address extracted from the conference logistics is updated with the current participant communication address from the participant profile data associated with the participant communication address.

Connections to the current participant communication addresses are automatically allocated for providing an invitation to the conference based on the current participant communication address. An option is presented allowing participants connected via current participant communication addresses to accept or refuse the connection to the conference. A conference bridge associated with the current participant communication address is connected to each of the connected current participant communication addresses opting to accept the connection to the conference to the allocated conference bridge ports.

Larson et al. fail to disclose, teach or suggest all of the elements recited in amended independent claims 1, 16 and 27. For example, Larson et al. fail to suggest that participant profile data is provided by a subscriber initiating a conference, wherein the participant profile data includes a plurality of participant communication addresses and current participant communication addresses associated with each of the plurality of participant communication addresses. Rather, Larson et al. merely describe identifying participants using a range of names and numbers, which may include telephone numbers and email addresses. However, Applicants respectfully submit that the mere identification of a participant as described by Larson et al. does not equate to providing a plurality of participant communication addresses and current participant communication addresses associated with each of the plurality of participant communication addresses in participant profile data. The mere identifying of a participant in a manner described by Larson et al. does not allow a participant to be contacted using the name, telephone

number or email address. Relevant contact information must be provided to allow participants to be contacted.

Further, as admitted in the Office Action, Larson et al. fail to suggest that a current participant communication address is extracted from the conference logistics provided by the subscriber. The Office Action also admits that Larson et al. fail to suggest determining whether the participant profile data includes a current participant communication address matching the current participant communication address extracted from the conference logistics.

The Office Action admits that Larson et al. also fail to suggest that the extracted participant communication address extracted from the conference logistics is updated with the current participant communication address from the participant profile data associated with the participant communication address. Still further, the Office Action admits that Larson et al. also fail to suggest that connections to the current participant communication addresses are automatically allocated for providing an invitation to the conference based on the current participant communication address.

Nevertheless, the Office Action asserts that Hackbarth et al. provides the suggestion for the admittedly missing elements. However, Applicants respectfully submit that Hackbarth et al. fails to remedy the deficiencies of Larson et al.

Hackbarth et al. describes the use of presence clients to show current calendar plans and the time at a registered user's location. However, Hackbarth et al. also state that the presence clients are not responsible for managing any communications. This suggests that the information provided by the presence clients of Hackbarth et al. do not suggest that a current participant communication address is extracted from the conference

logistics provided by the subscriber. Nowhere do Hackbarth et al. mention extracting a current participant communication address. In fact, Hackbarth et al. does not describe extracting any information from a data file. Accordingly, Hackbarth et al. fails to suggest that a current participant communication address is extracted from the conference logistics provided by the subscriber.

Hackbarth et al. also fail to suggest determining whether the participant profile data includes a current participant communication address matching the current participant communication address extracted from the conference logistics. Rather, Hackbarth et al. maintains that each phone must be registered. Further, only presence data for registered individuals is maintained. Hackbarth et al. simply fails to compare any data to find a match for a current participant communication address. Moreover, Hackbarth et al. cannot make a determination as claims because Hackbarth et al. fail to suggest the extraction of a current participant communication address.

Hackbarth et al. also fail to suggest that the extracted participant communication address extracted from the conference logistics is updated with the current participant communication address from the participant profile data associated with the participant communication address. As described above, Hackbarth et al. fail to perform the extraction step. Thus, Hackbarth et al. cannot suggest that the extracted participant communication address extracted from the conference logistics is updated with the current participant communication address from the participant profile data associated with the participant communication address.

Still further, Hackbarth et al. fails to suggest that connections to the current participant communication addresses are automatically allocated for providing an invitation to the

conference based on the current participant communication address. Rather, Hackbarth et al. requires a user to perform a click function to dial a telephone number, to initiate or send an email or to initiate a conference.

With regard to Larson's additional shortcomings, Hackbarth et al. also fail to disclose, teach or suggest that participant profile data is provided by a subscriber initiating a conference. Rather, according to Hackbarth et al., all data is obtained directly from registered users of the system. Hackbarth et al. also fail to suggest participant profile data that includes a plurality of participant communication addresses and current participant communication addresses associated with each of the plurality of participant communication addresses. Rather, Hackbarth et al. merely describes the presence clients as described above. Hackbarth et al. suggests that indicators are used to enable users of the system to locate other users. However, the indicators only provide a prediction of a user's location based upon measurement of different parameters associated with registered users. Thus, the location of the users must be monitored and continually updated in order for one user to locate another user. Moreover, the mere prediction of where a user is, e.g., work, home, on the phone, etc., does not equate with providing a plurality of participant communication addresses for each participant nor does it equate with maintaining a current participant communication address from the plurality of participant communication addresses.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Larson et al. and Hackbarth et al., alone or in combination, fail to disclose, teach or suggest the elements recited in independent claims 1, 16 and 27, as amended.

Fitser et al. fail to overcome the deficiencies of Larson et al. and Hackbarth et al. Fitser et al. is cited as merely describing the presentation of an option for accepting or refusing an invitation to connect to a conference. Beginning at column 5, line 54, Fitser et al. describe the use of a PIN field that enables the subscriber to specify a PIN that can be used by other callers to place a call to the identified group. A caller providing a PIN which matches the data in this field will be allowed to place a call but will not be allowed to change the participants to the group or change any billing options. Billing indicators are stored in different fields and may be used to specify that the subscriber will pay the charges associated with the call placed to the telephone number specified in telephone number field. Labels are stored within other fields are associated with telephone numbers and are used to identify participant to be reached at the telephone numbers.

A subscriber is given the option to: (1) place a call, (2) schedule a call, (3) create a group identifier and a list of participants, or (4) modify an existing group. The subscriber is also given the option of scheduling a conference call with a particular calling group take place at a predetermined time in the future. If a prospective participant is expected to pay a share of the cost, the participant may be informed of this fact and given an opportunity to accept or deny the charges.

However, Fitser et al. fails to suggest presenting an option allowing conference participants that fare connected using a current participant communication addresses to accept or refuse the connection to the conference. Fitser et al. merely provides an option for avoiding charges.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Larson et al., Hackbarth et al. and Fitser et al., alone or in combination, fail to disclose, teach or suggest the elements recited in independent claims 1, 16 and 27, as amended.

Dependent claims 2, 4, 7-15, 17-18, 20 and 23-26 and 38-30 are also patentable over the references, because they incorporate all of the limitations of the corresponding independent claims 1, 16 and 27, respectively. Further dependent claims 2, 4, 7-15, 17-18, 20 and 23-26 and 38-30 recite additional novel elements and limitations. Applicants reserve the right to argue independently the patentability of these additional novel aspects. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that dependent claims 2, 4, 7-15, 17-18, 20 and 23-26 and 38-30 are patentable over the cited references.

On the basis of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the claims are in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration of this application and its allowance are requested.

If a telephone conference would be helpful in resolving any issues concerning this communication, please contact Attorney for Applicant, David W. Lynch, at 865-273-2135.

Respectfully submitted,

Merchant & Gould
324 S. Washington Street
Maryville, TN 37804
865-273-2135

By: 

Name: David W. Lynch
Reg. No.: 36,204